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Dear Coast Guard family member,

I cannot overstate the importance of having a family action plan in preparation for the upcoming hurricane season. When a major storm threatens our area, local emergency management officials may advise you to leave your home and seek shelter during an evacuation, especially if you live on the Gulf of Mexico, its barrier islands, along rivers, or in other low-lying areas. During the 2003 hurricane season, Hurricane CLAUDETTE threatened the upper Texas coast, and several communities were asked to evacuate. In 2001, Tropical Storm ALLISON inundated the Houston-Galveston area, leaving 34,000 homes without power, forcing 17,000 people from their homes and causing several billion dollars in damage. Because of the destructive and unpredictable nature of hurricanes and tropical storms, having a plan for where to go and preparing yourself for what to expect in the event of an evacuation will relieve unnecessary anxiety for your entire family.

What are your options if a hurricane threatens your area and your neighborhood is forced to evacuate? To help you answer these questions, the following enclosures explain evacuation planning and entitlements for military member, government civilian employees and families and provide helpful tips on preparing for the hurricane season. For those of you who have internet access, **there is additional information on hurricane precautions, categories, and other related websites at <http://www.uscg.mil/d8/groups/grugaly/> then click on HURRICANE INFO.**

Please take a few minutes to read through the attached information. I hope you will find it helpful in readying your family for the likelihood of hurricane evacuation. Semper Paratus – Always Ready!

Sincerely,

C.D. BALBONI  
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard  
Commander, Group Galveston

Enclosure: (1) Hurricane Evacuation Information for the 2004 Hurricane Season